

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2020

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans and English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF and various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by Johan, ZS6JPL. The audio can be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za. To join the bulletin mailing list, send an e-mail to the SARL Secretary.

In the news today:

THE IARU REGION 1 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE STARTS TODAY

JAMBOREE-ON-THE AIR AND CQ HOU KOERS NEXT WEEKEND

And

THE DRAFT 2021 SARL BLUE BOOK

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

THE IARU REGION 1 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE STARTS TODAY

The Opening Plenary of the 2020 Region 1 General Conference takes place at 09:00 CAT this morning, Sunday 11 October. 201 delegates are registered to attend the Conference. Information about the Member Societies attending, proxies and the voting numbers will be released during the Opening Plenary when the C2 Credentials Paper is presented. The Papers for the Conference are available on <https://r1papers.wordpress.com/>

On Sunday at 12:00, Committee 3 – Administration will meet, at 15:30 Committee 5 – VHF/UHF and Microwaves will meet and at 18:30 the Youth Working Group meeting. Meetings from Monday to Thursday are set for 09:00, 13:00 and 16:30 each day; Monday - Committee 4 – HF, Committee 7 – EMC and C5. Tuesday - the Spectrum Regulatory Liaison Committee and the Political Liaison Committee, C7 and C5. Wednesday - C4, C3 and C2 Budget. Thursday - C3 and then for the rest of the day, the Region 1 Secretary will draw up the documentation for the Final Plenary and distribute it to the delegates. The Final Plenary will take place from 09:00 on Friday morning and should be completed during the second session starting at 13:00.

SOLAR PHYSICIST PREDICTS A SLIGHTLY BETTER SOLAR CYCLE 25

Solar physicist Leif Svalgaard of the WW Hansen Experimental Physics Laboratory at Stanford University has predicted a maximum sunspot number of 128 ± 10 - slightly better than Solar Cycle 24.

“The overall average is 132 ± 47 (median 124),” he said. “None of these numbers are substantially different, so one could perhaps just go with the ‘wisdom of the

crowd.’ All predictions we consider have the underlying assumption that the sun has not changed its behaviour (its ‘spots,’ so to speak) on a timescale of a few centuries (the Maunder Minimum may possibly violate that assumption) and that there will be no such changes in the near future, despite speculative suggestions”. Those included one of his own in 2013.

Svalgaard characterised the science of solar cycle prediction to be still in its infancy, “borne out by the extreme range of predictions of Cycle 25.” Thanks to Frank Donovan, W3LPL and the ARRL Letter.

JAMBOREE-ON-THE AIR AND CQ HOU KOERS NEXT WEEKEND

Have you contacted your local Scout or Guide Group or Voortrekker Commando yet? The annual Jamboree-on-the-Air and CQ Hou Koers activities take place over the weekend of 17 and 18 October. JOTA runs from Friday evening 16 October to Sunday evening 18 October and CQ Hou Koers on Saturday 17 October. Here is your chance to allow these young people to talk to other Scouts, Guides and Voortrekkers via amateur radio. Contact Richard Hooper, ZS6RKE, at richard@sandringshamscouts.co.za or Andries Visagie, ZS6VL, at andries.visagie@gmail.com for more JOTA and CQ Hou Koers information. Do it today.

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

THE DRAFT 2021 SARL BLUE BOOK

The Draft 2021 Blue Book is available for download from the League website, follow the link on the front page. Read through the MS Word document, on page 1 you will find the guidelines. The document is divided into the General Rules, VHF contests, the Sprints and the HF contests. All VHF’ers across the country are asked to look at the VHF/UHF contest rules. Your comments and suggestions about the rules, length of a contest, starting and ending times, etc must be sent to contest@sarl.org.za by Friday 30 October 2020. Thank you to Sid, ZS5AYC; Anthony, ZS6ANT and Eddie, ZS6BNE for your input.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RADIO AMATEUR HEARS MARS RECONNAISSANCE ORBITER

According to a Spaceweather.com report, Scott Tilley, VE7TIL, in British Columbia, Canada, received a signal from the NASA Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO), flying just 274 kilometres above the red planet’s surface. The signal was an X-band carrier containing no data or telemetry. “Its purpose is to allow for Doppler tracking,” Tilley explained. “The rapid change in pitch of the signal is caused by the relative motion of the satellite and the observer.” He used a homemade satellite dish to hear the orbiter.

Tilley enjoys tracking down signals from “dead” satellites, zombie and spy satellites, but the MRO was a first for him. “MRO’s signal is weak, but it is one of the louder signals in Mars’ orbit,” he said. “The spacecraft has a large dish antenna it uses as a relay for other Mars missions. With the proximity of Mars these days, it was the perfect time to try.”

In 2018, Tilley saw the “signature” of the Imager for Magnetopause-to-Aurora Global Exploration (IMAGE), a NASA spacecraft believed to have died in 2005. That discovery delighted space scientists.

CONTEST NEWS

Only four logs were received for the second leg of the SARL VHF/UHF Digital Contest held over the weekend of 19 and 20 September 2020.

1st Carl Minne, ZS6CBQ – 80 709 points

2nd Koos Greyvenstein, ZS6KSG – 17 971 points

3rd Michael Folkey, ZR4MF – 12 641 points

4th Pierre Lindeque, ZS4PF – 9 218 points

The full set of September and the combined results of the SARL National Field Day have been published in HF Happenings 920.

CLUB NEWS

At the Annual General Meeting of the Durban Amateur Radio Club held on 3 October, they elected the following members to the committee:

Chairman and Treasurer: Louis de Bruin, ZS5LP

Vice Chairman: Shaun McGuone, ZS5SM

Secretary and QSL Manager: Kurt Linsin, ZS5KL

Members: Kathleen Drummond, ZS5OL; Sean Beukes, ZS5TI; Denham Eva, ZS5DE; Aubrey Worthington, ZS5ACW and Martin Botha, ZS5ADL

Subcommittees:

IT and Webmaster: Chris Fourie

Youth Group and PRO: Cindy Linsin

RAE: Louis de Bruin, ZS5LP; Kurt Linsin, ZS5KL and Shaun McGuone, ZS5SM

The Overberg Amateur Radio Club will hold their end of the year function on Saturday 14 November at the QTH of John and Judy at Stanford. There will be a short meeting and then the festivities will start. It will be the usual bring and braai and wood will be supplied. If you want to camp over that can also be arranged.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to remain at low levels. There are currently no sunspot regions visible. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. With the recent equinox, the 15 to 30 meter bands will, especially around sunset, provide some good DX fun. 10 meter may also have some surprises in store during the late afternoons. For more information, please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za

Finally, a diary of some upcoming events:

Today – The free online AMSAT-UK Satellite Colloquium and the opening of the 2020 IARU Region 1 Virtual General Conference

17 October – CQ Hou Koers

17 and 18 October – JOTA

21 and 22 October – The Orionids meteor shower

24 and 25 October – The CQ WW DX SSB contest

25 October – The PEARS HF Contest

31 October – the SAR 40 m Club Sprint

7 November – The RaDAR Challenge

14 November – The Overberg ARC year-end function

14 and 15 November – The SARL VHF/UHF Analogue contest

To conclude our bulletin, a recap of our main news story:

The Opening Plenary of the 2020 Region 1 General Conference takes place at 09:00 CAT this morning, Sunday 11 October. 201 delegates are registered to attend the Conference. Information about the Member Societies attending, proxies and the voting numbers will be released during the Opening Plenary when the C2 Credentials Paper is presented.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

We invite clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, in both English and Afrikaans, if possible, by following the News Inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items to include in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly radio program, Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 CAT. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band by courtesy of Louis, ZS5LP. A rebroadcast by Andy, ZS6ADY, can be heard on Monday evenings at 19:30 CAT on 3 620 kHz.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Herman Erasmus, ZS6CTA and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.